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## Tree-breeding grant for UCD

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The University of California, Davis, on Thursday received a \$6 million federal grant to improve breeding techniques for the pine and spruce trees typically grown in timber plantations, according to a news release from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The grant will support the Conifer Coordinated Agricultural Project, a nationwide research effort directed by UC Davis forest geneticist David Neale. Neale could not be reached for comment.

The project seeks to advance the state of the art in what's known as "marker-assisted breeding," which is used to refine and accelerate the process of selective breeding for desirable traits.

It does not involve controversial genetic engineering techniques.

-- Jim Downing

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